

Equipment Techs Certification Process

Every year since 1997, the Turf Equipment Technicians Association has attended the Equipment & Engine Training Council (EETC) Conference. This year the conference was held in Orlando, Florida, from April 17-20. The EETC conference brings manufacturers, distributors, dealers, educators, and industry related associations like TETA together. They go over the various technician certification tests that are available, and they create new ones. That's not to say that everyone who attends works on the same tests. TETA's main focus has been on the EETC Turf Committee, which is responsible for the current Reel Technology Certification Test. At this year's conference the Turf Committee representatives were from Jacobsen, John Deere, Foley United, various educators, and TETA.

Over the last year (and it took well over a year), there was – or at least that's what it seemed like – this notion of or need for a single test that would certify turf equipment technicians. It was the EETC board of Directors who finally said that all tests must be and will remain in their current format. After much debate the Turf Committee unanimously voted not to pursue a single certification test. Turf Equipment Certification will consist of the two stroke, four stroke, compact diesel, electrical, hydraulic driveline, reel technology tests and any other that may be created in the future for the sole purpose of certifying turf equipment technicians.

The Turf Committee agreed that the current tests should be examined to see if any of the questions are not related to turf equipment. These questions would be replaced with appropriate ones. The committee also decided to create a mission statement and measures for certifying turf equipment technicians. The chairman of the Turf Committee, Mark Nelson of Briggs & Stratton, resigned, and new co-chairmen were elected. Erik Sides of Jacobsen Turf Care and Wes Danielewicz of TETA are the new Co-Chairmen. Once these issues were settled, the discussion turned to what certification tests, if any, should be added. After some discussion it was determined that sprayers/spraying systems or utility vehicles might be a good step forward.



New co-chairman of the EETC Turf Committee (l to r) Mark Nelson and Wes Danielewicz and past chairman Mark Nelson.

It is amazing how much work is accomplished in the two-day period of this conference. There are those who feel that certification can be obtained by answering a few questions and calling you certified. The EETC certification tests are recognized by the turf industry because manufacturers such as Jacobsen,

John Deere, and Toro are part of the Turf Committee. Educational Institutions such as Boise State University, Penn State University, Texas State Technical College, Walla Walla Community College, and many more, recognize the importance of having one organization, such as the EETC, organize and create these certification tests. If every tech association tried to create their own certification program, those programs would not mean a thing. An organization such as the EETC brings the industry together under one

roof, at one table, to create and recognize the need for turf equipment certification.

The EETC technician certification tests are designed to show an employer that a candidate for a technician's position has the basic knowledge needed to do the job. They are a tool for judging a technician's knowledge of the fundamentals, theory, and service of two and four stroke gas engines, compact diesel engines, electrical systems, hydraulic systems, drive trains, and reel technology.

For more information on EETC or certification testing visit www.tetaonline.org or www.eetc.org. -OC